

INDUSTRY UPDATE

Biweekly Period Ending May 20, 2000

Phoenix Metro Area

Manufacturing

One-year-old **MyPlant.com**, a Web site which sells products used to **manage industrial buildings** (e.g., automated controls), is moving its **corporate headquarters** to the Kierland development in **northeast Phoenix**. A subsidiary of Honeywell International, MyPlant.com expects **employment to grow from 100 to 250** within the next year to 16 months. Currently, MyPlant.com operates out of several Honeywell facilities in the Valley. Morristown, N.J.-based Honeywell expects to spend \$10 million to increase staffing and pay for rental of 27,000 square feet of office space.

Eclipse Aviation Corp. is **moving** its aircraft manufacturing operation — and a potential 2,000 new jobs by 2007 — from Scottsdale **to Albuquerque**. A \$20 million tax and employment incentive from the state of New Mexico was successful in luring the maker of corporate jets to Albuquerque from the Scottsdale Airpark.

Construction

Plans for construction of two natural gas-fired **power plants** near **Gila Bend** is **spurring development** in the sleepy hamlet 50 miles southwest of downtown Phoenix. The prime target for development are 35,000 acres of the 68,000-acre Paloma Ranch. Already investors have bought 320 acres for a **water-ski park** 17 miles north of Gila Bend; 209 acres for **Diamond Lake Ranch**, a mixed-use development featuring 200 homes, retail shops, an RV park with 800 spaces, and 35 acres of lakes; a 500-acre **tree and plant nursery**; and a **new hotel**.

Trade

Stock up on antacids as **two spicy restaurant chains** are invading the Phoenix metro area. In early May, Southwest fast-food chain **Taco Cabana** opened in Goodyear the first of **15 to 20** planned **Valley locations**. The Texas-based company, which specializes in Tex-Mex cuisine, has 120 restaurants in five states. And Michigan-based **BD's Mongolian Barbeque** recently **hired 100 workers** when it opened its first Valley restaurant on Mill Avenue in **downtown Tempe**. No information was available about possible future Phoenix-area locations.

Services

Three hundred jobs are expected to be **created** by the opening of a **Brown & Brown Chevrolet dealership** near the Superstition Springs Mall in east Mesa. The 10-acre **facility**, slated to **open in August**, will be the second Chevrolet and fourth overall dealership for Brown & Brown, which is owned by national car retailer AutoNation.

Government

The **booming economy** is making it extremely **difficult** for **Valley law-enforcement agencies to fill positions**, according to a story in *The Arizona Republic*. The Phoenix Police Department and the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office are both facing severe shortages of qualified candidates. **Phoenix PD** currently has **110 vacancies**, while the **Maricopa County Sheriff's Office** will **need 1,600 deputies and jail guards** in the next four years to fill 800 new positions and 800 vacancies caused by retirements and resignations. And the **Arizona Department of Public Safety** needs **60 new officers** to maintain a minimum level of service, the

state agency said.

The **Federal Reserve** has broken ground on a \$13 million **currency operations center** at McDowell Road and 47th Avenue in **Phoenix**. The cash facility, which will store and distribute cash to Arizona banks, will be a first for the 87-year-old Federal Reserve. Up until now, currency operations have only been maintained at a Federal Reserve bank or one of its branches. Arizona currently has its cash shipped by truck from Los Angeles, a more time-consuming and costly service. When completed in September 2001, the facility is expected to **employ around 50** people.

Tucson Metro Area

Manufacturing

A **company** that makes **custom aircraft interiors** is seeking **40 additional workers**, but is having a hard time finding them. **Bomhoff Inc.**, which also has an operation in Wichita, Kan., has grown from two to nearly 90 employees in its two years in Tucson. An aviation program at Pima Community College has been supplying many of the Bomhoff's new hires.

Trade

Wal-Mart Corp. plans to open its **first "supercenter" in Tucson** – and fifth statewide — by early fall. The 207,000-square-foot store near the Foothills Mall at LaCholla Boulevard and West Magee Road will **employ 500 people**, with 70 percent working full time. Wal-Mart employs 14,000 people in Arizona at 45 Wal-Mart and Sam's Club stores.

Balance of State

Construction

By a 55-45 margin, **Prescott Valley** voters approved a referendum in mid-May that will allow rezoning of 1,243 acres for a **3,400-home subdivision** and 190-acre golf course. The **Glassford Hill project**, which is expected to take 12 to 17 years to complete, still must re-

ceive certification of an adequate water supply at a hearing July 12. **Universal Homes**, the developer, expects to break ground shortly after it receives final approval.

Services

Work has begun on a **14,000-square-foot child-care facility** for 2,200 employees of Riverside Resort Casino in Laughlin, Nev. The \$1.2 million **Parkway Childcare Center** — which will include indoor and outdoor recreational facilities, computer centers, a library, and several age-appropriate learning centers — will be located at the **Bullhead Air Park in Bullhead City**, Ariz., across the river from the hotel/casino. The center is expected to be completed by August.

Government

Graham County supervisors approved **23 new positions** for the recently completed **Juvenile Detention Facility** in **Safford** on Highway 70 next to the Graham County Services Building. The largest number of positions needed to be filled will be **15 juvenile detention officers**, with starting annual pay of \$21,900. The facility will also hire three sergeants at \$25,600 per year.

INDUSTRY UPDATE

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